The Depot

from train station to community center

By David Morgan

Train depots hold a certain romantic aura for those who yearn for the days of steam locomotives; fast night expresses and passsenger service which went from tiny towns to metropolises.

The Ninety Six Depot has come a long way since it was used as a passenger and freight station for Southern Railway.

Bruce Ezell said the original depot was a wooden structure which stood approximately where the Ninety Six Branch Library now stands.

This was eventually torn down and the present depot was erected between 1906 and 1907. Ezell said this was determined by the use of oyster shells instead of lime in the brick mortar which was discontinued around 1912.

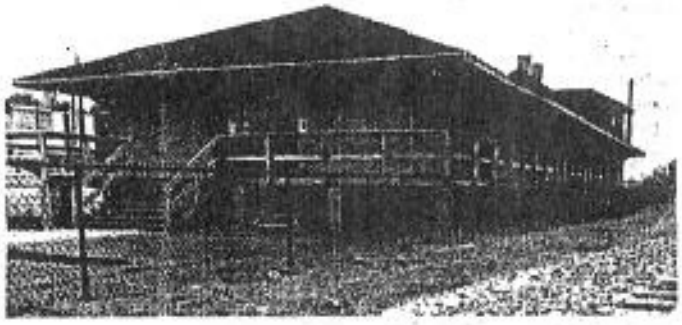
He added that Southern discontinued passenger service to Ninety Six around 1960.

After Southern discontinued use of the depot altogether, it was used for a while as headquarters by the town sanitation department, according to Town Council Member Carolyn Bell.

She said a movement was undertaken to restore the depot and turn it into a community center. In 1978, the town received a $20,000 rural development grant from the governor's office for restoration purposes.

In 1981, after remodeling, the dream became a reality. Thebuilding has one large meeting room and two smaller ones. Mayor Arvest Turner said the larger room, once the freight area, would eventually be air conditioned.

Mrs. Bell said there are also plans to staff a visitor's center in the depot sometime in the future.



THE NINETY SIX DEPOT was constructed for the Southern Railway Company around 1905. Out of service for several years, it was remodeled in 1981 and is now used by the town as a community center.

NINETY SIX HAS CHANGED some since the turn of the c post card shows how West Main Street looked in the early

Star Fort: center of attraction

Star Fort has been the center of attraction in the Ninety Six area for a long time. Throughout the latter half of the 19th century, Star Fort served as a popular gathering place for picnics and assemblies.

On June 18, 1878, a celebration was held at Star Fort to honor the 97th anniversary of the siege of Ninety Six. The event was a gala affair and included notables from throughout the state, including Governor Wade Hampton, who was a

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